

But there will be those in this debate who will be defending the President's failed strategy in Iraq by attacking the President's critics. They ask, what message would America send to its troops in combat if Congress votes to repudiate the President's plan? What message, indeed?

Mr. Speaker, the question really is, what message did Congress send to our troops from the very beginning of this miserable war?

What message did Congress send to the troops in the beginning of this miserable war when they voted to go to war based upon the lack of proper evidence, false evidence, manipulated evidence and, in fact, outright lies to the American people and to the world about the situation in Iraq, and certainly a war that was not vital to the interest of the United States?

What message did Congress send when it allowed the President to go to war without enough troops to secure the peace?

What message did the Congress send when it allowed our troops to go into combat without proper armored vehicles?

What message did Congress send when it allowed our troops to go into combat without proper protective body armor?

And what message did the Congress send when it allowed the President to continue a failed course in Iraq with no adjustments in strategy?

What message did Congress send when it allowed the President to effectively draft American volunteers by continuing their tours of duty over and over again?

And what message did the Congress send to our troops, indeed?

But there is a new Congress now and there is a new message for our troops. By raising objections to the President's failed strategy, and by demanding a new course in Iraq and the immediate and responsible redeployment of our forces, we will send a new and clear message to our troops. Our message to the American forces in combat is that we will not let you fight and die forever in Iraq with no plan to get you out, with no exit plan. Our message is that we will insist that the Iraqis take responsibility for their country and the building of a democracy, and that soon American forces will be brought home or redeployed to fight the real war on terror.

Our message is that the American forces will not be used to fight Iraq's civil war. Our message to the President's few remaining supporters in the House and Senate is, do not exploit our brave troops in combat in a desperate and vain effort to bolster a weak President. Do not use our brave men and women serving in Iraq to cling to a misguided policy that is dangerous for America's interests and for its troops as well.

Join us in opposing the escalation of the war in Iraq, and when we see that history is now repeating itself, where

once again the administration is prepared to send our soldiers into Iraq without proper equipment and without proper training, demand, instead, a new strategy to get America out of Iraq's civil war, to get Iraq to take responsibility for its own future, and to use our troops for the proper mission, to defend America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

H. RES. 109, PINEDALE ASSEMBLY CENTER RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 109, recognizing the historical significance of the Pinedale Assembly Center located in Fresno, California.

The history of this internment center is a reflection of the 65th anniversary of Executive Order 9066, which reminds us of a dark chapter in U.S. history.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the order authorizing the forced internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans, placing tremendous hardship on the innocent that, in many cases, resulted in a loss of jobs, businesses, property and ultimately, in some cases, their dignity.

Further, the internment was a violation of their constitutional rights. Internees were denied their liberty, their civil rights, the right to due process, and equal protection under the law. Yet, no Japanese American, before or after their internment, was ever accused or convicted of espionage or sabotage.

In fact, over 14,000 Japanese Americans served valiantly and on a voluntary basis in our Armed Forces during World War II with great distinction. One could only imagine what went through their minds, the members of our military, as they defended our Nation's freedoms, while their own families were languishing back in American internment camps.

Pinedale, then, following the order, was a relocation center, and the Japanese Americans throughout the West were asked to report to these relocation centers. This relocation center handled over 4,823 individuals.

Numbers are just numbers, ladies and gentlemen. But let me tell you some of the stories that passed through this camp.

A dear friend of mine, and a beloved Member of this body, the late Congressman Bob Matsui, arrived at the Pinedale Assembly Center at age two.

Congressman Matsui fought against all odds, as did all of those, and despite the prejudice and the hardships, rose to be a great leader of our Nation.

Another story, James Hirabayashi, interned there at age 17. And he wrote, and you can imagine hearing the words: "My parents and three siblings and myself occupied a single barrack at the Pinedale detention camp. However, we were soon to be split further apart and never regained the unified family life during the war."

Later, James received his Ph.D. at Harvard, became a professor of anthropology at San Francisco State and now chairs the Asian Studies program.

Another story: Jack Hata was evacuated to Pinedale on his 21st birthday. He recalled: "The assembly center was made up of rows of tarpapered black barracks enclosed by barbed wire fencing with armed guard towers. The most vivid recollection of the Pinedale experience had to be that of a strong, hot wind picking up every mid-afternoon blowing dust over the entire camp and making seeing and breathing very difficult."

Today, ladies and gentlemen, much has changed. Pinedale is a part of our history, a place of loss, of hatred and fear. But now it will be transformed into a place of remembrance for healing and hope.

The Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project Committee cosponsored by the Central California District of Japanese American Citizens and the California Nikkei Foundation is establishing a memorial. The memorial would not have been possible without the dedication and diligence of all those who have supported this effort, including Judge Dale Ikeda, chairman of the memorial project.

I am one of those that serves on the Project Advisory Committee. But Dale says it best: "By preserving the Pinedale Assembly Center story, we hope to teach a lesson in history, that it takes people to ensure 'justice for all.' And rather, it is the duty of each generation to strive to form a more perfect union for ourselves and for the sake of our children."

The memorial groundbreaking will take place next week, February 19, on the 65th anniversary of the executive order.

Today, over 5,000 Japanese Americans, many former World War II internees and their families, live in Fresno County, and the Pinedale Memorial will honor these and those who suffered during that period.

The memorial sends a message that we are committed to healing historical wounds and replacing the prejudice and fear with the American values of equality and justice.

It has been said that those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Let's make sure this memorial helps us learn.

Allow me to close by reading the parts of the memorial plaque inscription that will be dedicated next week: